Assessment Administrators Anonymous: 12 Steps for Involving Faculty in Assessment

Jillian Kinzie (Indiana University) & Nathan Lindsay (UMKC)
AAC&U General Education & Assessment Conference
February 28, 2014
Overall, faculty members at my institution have a positive view of assessment.*

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Not applicable

*Graph represents Audience response
In the past few years at my institution, faculty members’ views about assessment have improved*. 

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Not applicable

*Graph represents Audience response
The assessment of general education is conducted effectively at my institution*.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Not applicable

*Graph represents Audience response
Greater faculty involvement in assessment has been a serious concern since the beginning of the assessment movement some 25 years ago.

The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment’s (NILOA) survey of provosts revealed that gaining faculty involvement in assessment is a top priority (Kuh & Ikenberry, 2009, 2014).
To what extent do the following institutional structures, resources, and features support assessment activities?

- Faculty involvement
- Assessment committee
- IR office
- Assessment staff
- Professional development
- Student participation
- Student Affairs involvement
- Funds
- Center for teaching and learning
- Assessment management system
- Recognition and Rewards
- Other
NILOA Asked Provosts...but what do you think?

**What Would Be Most Helpful to Your Institution as You Assess Undergrad Student Learning?**

| 1. | More prof. development faculty/staff |
| 2. | Greater assessment staff capacity |
| 3. | More student affairs (SA) involved in assessment |
| 4. | More SA using results |
| 5. | Stronger admin support |
| 6. | More student particip. in assessment |
| 7. | External funding |
| 8. | Info. on best practice |
| 9. | Greater sharing across units |
| 10. | More opp to collaborate other instит. |
| 11. | More valid & reliable measures |
| 12. | More faculty involved in assessment |
| 13. | More faculty using the results |
| 14. | Technologies |
| 15. | More resources $/staff |
What Would Be Most Helpful to Your Institution as You Assess Undergrad Student Learning*

1. Greater assessment staff capacity
2. More resources / staff
3. Assessment technologies
4. More faculty involved in assessment
5. More valid and reliable measures
6. More faculty using the results
7. More professional development for faculty and staff

*Graph represents Audience response
Provosts said... Most helpful to assess undergraduate student learning

- More prof. development faculty/staff
- More faculty using the results
- More Resources financial/staff
- Greater assessment staff capacity
- Technologies
- More faculty involved in assessment
- More valid and reliable measures
- Greater sharing cross units
- Info. on best practice
- External funding
- More student particip. in assessment
- Stronger admin support
- More SA using results
- More SA involved in assessment
- More opp to collaborate other...
- Other
The State of the Assessment Union...

- Greater faculty involvement in assessment has been a serious concern since the beginning of the assessment movement some 25 years ago.
- The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment’s (NILOA) survey of provosts revealed that gaining faculty involvement in assessment is a top priority (Kuh & Ikenberry, 2009, 2014).
- The concern is substantive because faculty involvement is seen as key to the influence of assessment in the improvement of teaching and learning (Hutchings, 2010).
Faculty Conversations about General Education Learning and Assessment

- These can be hard!
  - Who owns Gen Ed?
  - Different Personalities
  - Sincere Disagreement
  - Shared Curriculum vs. Autonomy
  - Reluctance to Change
#1: Assessment of and for Learning

- We care about students’ learning
- Stakeholders require evidence of learning
- Kill two birds with one stone, but focus on the first bird the most consistently
Four “Big Picture” questions to get faculty to discuss assessment

- How do you define a successful student?
- What have you learned about your students’ learning?
- Are you satisfied with the results?
- If not satisfied with the results, what are you going to do about it?
#2: Embedded Assessment

- As much as possible, make program assessment fit course assessment
- Use projects, assignments, exams already in place
- Develop consistent rubrics
- Reduce impact of assessment on faculty time
- Increase impact of assessment on utility for faculty
#3: Connecting to Broader Institutional Initiatives

- “People don’t want to ‘do assessment’; they want to realize a dream, improve what they’re doing, or be excited by a new initiative.” (p. 12)

- Assessment can be connected to “departmental review, strategic planning, and curriculum revision, or initiatives such as retention, learning communities, distance learning, or enhancing productivity.” (p. 12)
Harnessing assessment for improvement

- Initial response was for accreditation. Then shifted to intentionally embed assessment into institutional culture and, meaningful institutional planning and improvement efforts.

- Augustana College: Shared an accreditation report with faculty during a retreat. Faculty found results acceptable, but felt the institution could do better. Formed 20 study groups, involving many faculty, to examine aspects of the college. Led to meaningful improvement that helped to advance assessment activities.
Assessing High Impact Practices

- Interdisciplinary General Education
- Service Learning
- Undergraduate Research
- Internships
- Learning Communities
- Study Abroad
- Other?
#4: Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

At UMKC: A Faculty-Centered, Faculty-Led Initiative

- Incredible support provided by the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching (FaCET)
- Invaluable training provided by FaCET Faculty Fellow, and faculty across campus
- Direct mentoring sessions with individuals and groups available on Wednesdays, or by appointment
Assessment at CMU is driven by questions raised by faculty about student learning & effective teaching and is informed by curricular interests, program goals, and the discipline. Assessment is supported by faculty in the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence

— Eberly Center is the hub of assessment support
#5: Systemic Assessment Training for the Next Generation

- New Faculty Orientation
- Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program
- Using the language of assessment with students
- Reaching out to colleges and departments in their own space
#6: Develop a Smorgasbord of Assessment Resources

- University Assessment website
- Academic degree assessment
- General education assessment
- University Assessment Committee
Assessment Resources

- Assessment Handbook
  - Core principles and processes regarding UMKC assessment
  - WEAVE guidelines
  - Assessment glossary
  - 10 FAQs
  - Appendices

Available at
The “Assessable Roo” Newsletter

- Published quarterly
- Features excellent work in assessment that is occurring across campus
- Highlights other best practices in assessment
Readings for Engaging Faculty

- “What New Faculty Need to Know about Assessment”

- “Creating a Faculty Culture of Student Success”
  [http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/pubs/Creating%20A%20Faculty%20Culture%20of%20Student%20Success.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/pubs/Creating%20A%20Faculty%20Culture%20of%20Student%20Success.pdf)

- *For Assessment Administrators*: “Opening doors to faculty involvement in assessment” (NILOA Occasional Paper No.4).
  [www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperfour.htm](http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/occasionalpaperfour.htm)
Your Reflections…

1. How are you connecting assessment to broader initiatives on your campus?

2. How are you encouraging peer-mentoring on your campus?

3. Based on the other steps we’ve discussed so far, what other recommendations do you have for engaging faculty?
“Scholarship Assessed” Standards:

1. Must develop clear goals
2. Must include adequate preparation
3. Must use appropriate methods
   A. Using longitudinal data
   B. Running demographic comparisons
4. Should show outstanding results
5. Offer effective communication
6. Consider a reflective critique
Juniata College: Faculty Led Assessment

- Emphasize assessment as scholarly inquiry, as in the literature on the scholarship of teaching & learning.
Benefits of Publishing & Presenting Assessment Practices:

• Forces rigorous assessment methods.
• Improves faculty scholarship in their fields of study.
• Provides feedback for your own teaching and assessment practices.
• Provides a community of fellow learners to share ideas and solve problems.
• Influences the academy to improve student learning.
• Provides professional recognition and advancement opportunities.
#8: Promote Curriculum Mapping

**Definition**
- A method for aligning a program’s learning outcomes and courses

**A Curriculum Map answers the question:**
- Where are what learning outcomes taught in your curriculum?

**Benefits**
- Proactive approach to improving learning outcomes
- Clarify priorities when there are limited resources
- Enhances coherence by revealing gaps in the curriculum
- Improves communication among faculty
- Encourages reflective practice as instructors
- Supports “major maps” for students
- Refines the assessment plan
## Curriculum Map for Gen Ed

Indicate where SLO is:  **Introduced**  **Reinforced**  **Assessed**

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<thead>
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<th>Content</th>
<th>Introductory Course</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
<th>Advanced Content Course A</th>
<th>Laboratory/Practicum Course</th>
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Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

[http://uwf.edu/cutla/](http://uwf.edu/cutla/)
#9: Student Involvement in Assessment

- Assessment should not be done behind a curtain
- Make assessment transparent for undergraduate and graduate students
Instructions to Faculty: Making Assessment Transparent to Students

- **Outline the learning outcomes** for your courses and degree, and list in the syllabus and on program website (see Bloom’s Taxonomy for assistance on the learning outcomes).

- **Explain the connections** between assignments and the learning outcomes.

- Explain the criteria for evaluating assignments (using a rubric or scoring guide—search on Google for rubrics in your field).

- Have students use the rubrics, give feedback on assignments, and provide opportunities for students to improve their work.
Letting Students Know You’ve Heard Their Voice

- Initiative developed by the Office of Student Life Assessment, based on similar program in student affairs at the University of Georgia.
- Communicates assessment findings back to the student body and other constituents.
- Emphasis is placed on demonstrating improvements made due to:
  - response to surveys
  - focus groups
  - other feedback

We’ve heard your voice... and taken action.

CHANGE #17
60% of UNCW Students Said they consume 1-2 servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

We Responded: Health Promotion provides nutrition programs (e.g., Plate Method Challenge, Smoothies in Sammy's Health Hut) to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables, and keeps a fresh fruit basket in the office lobby for students to enjoy!

Thank You for your feedback and time spent taking surveys about your UNCW experience.
At IUPUI – NSSE promotion includes how campus responded to results.

Tell us how you REALLY feel.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

We're listening.

How helpful are your interactions with faculty? How do you spend your time on campus? How has IUPUI contributed to your academic success? We want to know. That’s why we’ve teamed up with the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)—to ensure that your voice is heard and that we make the IUPUI experience exceptional.

Your college experience matters— to you, and to us. You have the power to make it better, so why not use it? Students’ opinions from the NSSE survey have brought about big changes at IUPUI, which include:

- More Themed Learning Communities (TLCs): African-American Perspectives, Crime in America, Health and Wellness, as well as TLCs for prospective engineering and business majors.
- The integration of diversity-related themes into the curriculum for Summer Bridge and First-Year Seminar courses through the University College.

CONTACT US

Misplaced your NSSE email and your link to the NSSE survey? Want more information? Contact us at sgraunke@iupui.edu.

Want regular updates about NSSE? Follow us on Twitter.
#10 Faculty Forums for Assessment

- FaCET mentoring sessions, webinars, and workshops
- Faculty Symposia
- Candid conversations, SWOT Analysis of Assessment
  - Provides a forum for faculty to voice their concerns.
  - Provides potential solutions for challenges and a roadmap for future assessment initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWOT Analysis Chart</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helpful to achieving the objective</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal origin (attributes of the organization)</td>
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<tr>
<td>External origin (attributes of the environment)</td>
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</table>
Faculty Assessment Teams

- Many benefits of departmental or college-wide assessment teams
  - Many hands make light work
  - Sharing best practices
  - Peer recognition
  - Faster feedback and guidance on student learning outcomes, measurements, etc.
  - Consistent follow-up
#11: Assessment as Part of Annual Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure

- Initiate conversations with department chair, deans, and colleagues about the value of assessment efforts on faculty members CV’s
  - Assessment as aspect of teaching quality
  - Assessment work disseminated through:
    - Conferences
    - Journal Articles
    - Other?
#12: Celebrate Good Assessment Results

- Students:
  - departmental showcase or newsletter
  - student research conference
  - Share student work as models for others

- Faculty:
  - Publish scholarship of assessment
  - Share results with students and other stakeholders

- All:
  - Promote a Culture of Learning on Campus
Which of the following AAA steps might be most useful to you*

1. Connecting to broader initiatives
2. Peer-to-peer mentoring
3. PFF and New Faculty Orientation
4. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
5. Curriculum Mapping
6. Student involvement in assessment
7. More faculty forums for assessment
8. Assessment as part of P&T
9. Celebrating successes
10. N/A or Other?

*Graph represents Audience response
NILOA Case Studies of Good Assessment Practice

- 9 inspirational, instructive accounts of assessment to improve student learning; and summary report.

**Case themes:**
- Augustana – assessment review committee’s role in engaging faculty
- Capella – assessment infrastructure and administrative support
- **Carnegie Mellon** – assessment fostered through Center for Teaching & Learning; creative faculty work
- Colorado State – online planning to support improvement
- Juniata – assessment as scholarly inquiry; publicly shared data
- LaGuardia CC – assess assessment; culture of assessment
- North Carolina A&T – professional development and culture of inquiry
- **St. Olaf** – faculty-led utilization-focused, backward-design
- Texas A&M University – openness and student focused

http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/CaseStudies
Good Practices from Other Institutions

- Salt Lake Community College has online videos highlighting faculty who have used assessment effectively:

- University of Kansas has an online teaching portfolio that provides examples of faculty assessment projects:
  http://www.cte.ku.edu/gallery/index.shtml (see “Evaluating student learning” and “Department analysis of learning”)
Question:

If you were to develop your own 12 step program for promoting assessment, what would you emphasize, or what other steps would you add?
Contact Information

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